

REMARKS

The amendments set out above and the following remarks are believed responsive to the points raised by the Office Action dated October 19, 2004. In view of the amendments set out above and the following remarks, reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The Pending Claims

Claim 6 has been canceled, and claims 1-5, 7-9, and 11-13 remain pending. Claims 1, 7-9, and 13 have been amended to describe the invention more clearly. No new matter has been added, the basis for the amended claim language may be found within the original specification, claims and drawings.

Entry of the above is respectfully requested.

The Office Action

Claims 1-9 and 11-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,626,473 to Klein et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Klein et al.") in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,940,585 to Schaad (hereinafter referred to as "Schaad").

Although the rejection of the claims is respectfully traversed, in order to expedite matters and to allow the application to pass to issuance quickly, claim 1 has been amended to generally include the limitation of previously pending claim 6.

Amended claim 1 is directed to an electrical switch comprising, *inter alia*, an actuator disposed in an opening in a housing with a gap formed between the actuator and the housing, wherein a resiliently deformable seal is connected across the gap to seal off the gap, the seal comprising a sleeve having an inner part, an outer part that is considerably thicker than the inner part, and opposite open ends connected to the housing and the actuator respectively, a first of the open ends being disposed around and surrounding the corresponding one of the housing and actuator.

Neither of the cited references discloses or suggests the present invention as defined by amended claim 1. For example, Klein et al. does not disclose or even suggest an electrical switch including a resiliently deformable seal comprising a sleeve having opposite open ends connected to the housing and the actuator respectively. Rather, Klein et al. discloses a push actuator including a soft component 22 which has a cap shape including a cap bottom 31 and a cap mantle 32 (see, e.g., Klein et al. col. 2, lines 34-46 and Figures 2-3.) Clearly, the electrical switch of Klein et al. does not include a seal comprising a sleeve having opposite open ends. Further, there is no suggestion in Klein et al. of a seal comprising a sleeve having

opposite open ends. For example, Klein et al. teaches the advantages of a soft-component having a cap shape, advantages which are provided by the closed end of the "cap", e.g., a positive locking connection of the two components 21, 22 and a reinforcement of the cap bottom (see e.g., Klein et al., col. 2, lines 54-60 and col. 1, lines 61-65, respectively). Thus, unlike the present invention, which includes a seal comprising a sleeve having opposite open ends, Klein et al. discloses and teaches the advantages of a soft component having a closed end.

The Office Action alleges with respect to Klein et al. (at page 3, lines 4-7) that, "seal 22, 30 comprises a sleeve 29, 39 having opposite ends connected to the opening (see the attachment) and the actuator cap 21, respectively, a first of the ends (see the attachment), being disposed around the corresponding one of the opening and actuator cap 21". The attachment in the Office Action identifies a "first end" and a "second end" of element 22. However, elements 29 and 39 of Klein et al. do not comprise a sleeve having opposite open ends, but rather element 29 merely comprises a u-shaped portion of the cap bottom 31 and element 39 merely comprises the thickness of element 22 (see, e.g., col. 4, lines 8 and 18).. Furthermore, the attachment in the Office Action which includes points labeled "first end" and "second end" shows that these points are not *open* ends of element 22, indeed, they are not even *ends*, but rather are arbitrary intermediate points on element 22. For example, the attachment in the Office Action shows that the element 22 extends beyond the point labeled "first end", e.g., to the snap-in element 43, and beyond the point labeled "second end", e.g., into the region below the plate 25. Thus, there is no disclosure or suggestion in Klein et al. of the claimed switch.

The fact that Schaad may disclose a push-button electrical switch comprising a plurality of fixed contacts is of no import. Schaad simply does not cure the deficiencies of Klein et al., and therefore, the combination fails to render the present invention obvious.

Since the independent claim is allowable for the reasons set forth above, the dependent claims are allowable as they depend from the novel and non-obvious independent claim.

For the reasons set forth above, reconsideration of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the amendment and remarks recited herein, the application is considered in good and proper form for allowance, and the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

In re Appln. of Man Chi LI
Application No. 10/624,542

If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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